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Dwyer, Widnall buck LBJ, CIA on Red car deal

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WASHINGTON — Against the advice of the Central Intelligence Agency, Reps. William B. Widnall (R-7th Dist.) and Florence P. Dwyer (R-12th Dist.) are preparing a high-pitched assault on an Administration plan to "build bridges" to Communist East Europe.

The bridge attack will arise when the House and Senate consider legislation to extend and expand the lending authority of the government's export-import bank.

Republican House members are determined to block passage of the bill because the bank is proposing to extend credits of about \$50 million to the Soviet Union to finance its purchase of American machinery for a new Fiat automobile plant to be built at an estimated cost of \$1 billion on a bend of the Volga River.

The administration measure, expected to be reported out by the House Rules Committee for full debate within the next two weeks, is at the forefront of a new policy to divert Soviet resources from military production by helping it build automobiles and other consumer goods through expanded East-West trade.

The Departments of State, Commerce and Defense and the Central Intelligence Agency all have testified before House and Senate committees that the Fiat deal would be helpful policy—and that the American machinery would have no strategic value for building military weapons. Other western nations are extending credits for the \$1 billion Fiat deal, and the Soviets are capable of tak-

ing Congress stalls, the administration has warned.

Republicans, in lining up against the Fiat loan, contend there is nothing desirable in expanding East-West trade at a time when Soviet weapons are killing American soldiers in Vietnam.

Mrs. Dwyer has protested that "it makes no sense at all to help those who are helping others to hurt us."

'NOT THE TIME'

And, in urging the bill's defeat, the New Jersey congresswoman said "extending a \$50 million credit to the Soviet Union, even indirectly, could so easily be misunderstood by friend and enemy alike. In my judgment, this is not the time and these are not the means."

A Republican-backed amendment to prohibit the Fiat loan failed last week in the House Banking and Currency Committee. It lost by an 18-15 vote, with one Republican voting in support of the administration and two southern Democrats taking the Republican view against the \$50 million deal.

The Republican leadership in the House and Senate plan a vigorous fight against the deal, even if it means crippling the 33-year-old export-import bank. House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford (R-Mich.) spoke for Senate Minority Leader Everett McKinley Dirksen (R-Ill.) when he protested last week "The Johnson-Humphrey administration plan to 'trade with the enemy by 'building bridges' between us and these Communist dealers in death."

SOME DISAGREE

Not all Republicans, however, agree with their leadership.

Sen. Thruston B. Morton of Kentucky, former chairman of the Republican National Committee, intends to lead the fight on the Senate floor for the Fiat deal and expanded East-West trade.

Morton will bring his noteworthy debating skills into the chamber with firm support from Republican liberal colleagues, including Sens. Charles H. Percy of Illinois, Jacob K. Javits of New York and John Sherman Cooper of Kentucky.

There are indications in the House, too, that some Republicans are reluctant to cripple the Export-Import Bank to please cold war advocates back home.

Rep. Seymour Halpern (R-N.Y.) voted in committee to prohibit the Fiat loan and table the bill, but on a voice vote he broke from Widnall and Dwyer and urged that the measure be reported to the House for passage. He was joined by Chester L. Mize (R-Kans.), who has spoken publicly in support of expanded East-West trade despite the Vietnam war.